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WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES

THE
BUNKER HILL
MONUMENT
ORATIONS
WEBSTER

NEW YORK
CHARLES E. MERRILL CO.

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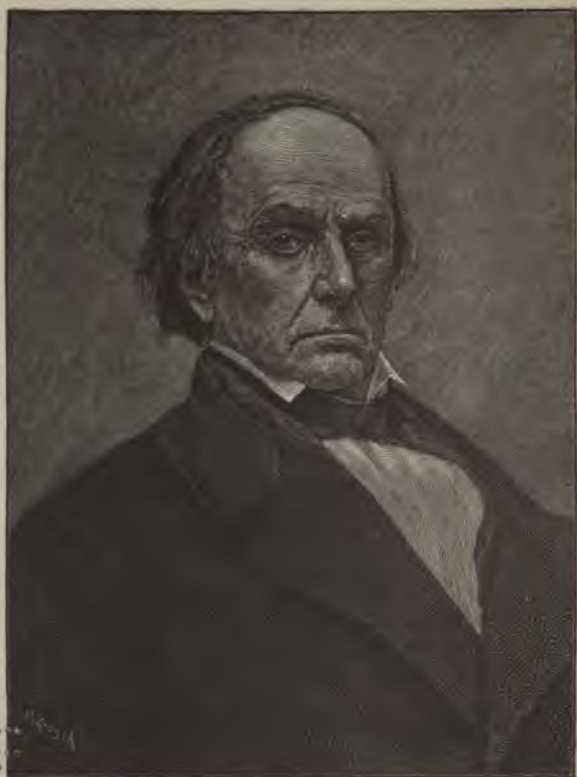
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THE
BUNKER HILL MONUMENT
ORATIONS.

THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT. (1825.)
COMPLETION OF THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT. (1843.)

BY
DANIEL WEBSTER.

WITH
INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

EDITED BY
ALBERT F. BLAISDELL.

NEW YORK
CHARLES E. MERRILL CO.

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LIFE OF DANIEL WEBSTER.

DANIEL WEBSTER, one of the greatest orators and statesmen that this country ever produced, was born in the town of Salisbury (now known as Franklin), New Hampshire, on the 18th of January, 1782. His father, Ebenezer Webster, was a distinguished soldier and officer in the Revolutionary War. After the war, he moved with his large family into what was then the savage wilds of New Hampshire. He was a man of little book-learning, but with his strong mind and vigorous frame he became a sort of intellectual leader in his neighborhood. He was appointed a "side-judge" for the county, a place of considerable influence in those days. His great aim was to educate his children to the utmost of his limited ability. Captain Webster married Abigail Eastman for a second wife. She was a woman of more than ordinary intellect, and possessed a force of character which was felt throughout the humble circle in which she moved. She was ambitious for her two sons, Ezekiel and Daniel, that they should excel. The distinction attained by both, and especially by Daniel, may well be traced in part to her early promptings and judicious guidance. In the last year of the Revolutionary War, in the humble house which his father had built in the woods on the outskirts of civilization, Daniel Webster was born. During his childhood, he was sickly and delicate, and gave no promise of the robust and vigorous frame which he had in his manhood. It may well be supposed that his early opportunities for education were very scanty. Because he was frail and delicate, Daniel's parents took great pains to send him to the winter schools, oftentimes three miles away from home. As an older half-brother said, "Dan was sent to school that he might get to know as much as the other boys." It is probable that the best part of his early education was derived from the judicious and experienced father, and the resolute, affectionate and ambitious mother. In those days books were very scarce and Daniel eagerly read every book he could find. He was fond of poetry and at the age of twelve could repeat from memory the greater part of Watts' "Psalms and Hymns." In his "Autobiography" he says: "I remember that my father brought home from some of the lower towns Pope's *Essay on Man*, published in a sort of pamphlet. I took it, and very soon could repeat it from beginning to end. We had so few books, that to read them once or twice was nothing. We thought they were all to be got by heart." At the age of fourteen, he was sent to Phillips Academy, in Exeter, N. H., but remained only nine months on account of the poverty of

the family. The future orator found his greatest trouble at Exeter in declaiming. "Many a piece," says Webster "did I commit to memory, and recite and rehearse, in my own room, over and over again; yet when the day came, when the school collected to hear declamations, when my name was called, and I saw all eyes turned to my seat, I could not raise myself from it. When the occasion was over, I went home and wept bitter tears of mortification." He now studied with a clergyman at home and entered Dartmouth College in 1797. The familiar story of how young Webster "worked his way" through college and the self-denial and rigid economy he exercised is told in his "Autobiography." After graduation, hard pushed for money while studying law, how he took charge of an academy at Fryeburg, Maine, for one dollar a day. He paid his board by copying deeds and sent his spare money to help his brother Ezekiel through Dartmouth. Webster was admitted to the bar in 1805, began practice in Boscawen, and afterwards in Portsmouth. He took a high rank in his profession at once, and, in 1812, was elected a member of Congress. In 1816, he declined a re-election and removed to Boston. In the next seven years he worked long and hard in his profession and soon established his reputation as one of the ablest lawyers of the land. In 1822 he was again sent to Congress and in 1828 he was chosen a Senator. He remained in the Senate for twelve years, when he was appointed Secretary of State by President Harrison. In 1845 he returned to the Senate, and remained until 1850, when he became Secretary of State under President Fillmore. He resigned his office early in 1852 on account of his health and retired to his home by the seaside at Marshfield, Mass., where he died October 24 of the same year.

Daniel Webster is universally acknowledged to be the foremost of constitutional lawyers and of parliamentary debaters, and without a peer in the highest realms of classic and patriotic oratory. Many of his orations, as the famous Bunker Hill Monument orations, the eulogy upon Adams and Jefferson, the speech upon the trial of the murderers of Capt. Joseph White, the "Reply to Hayne," and others are universally accepted as classics in modern oratory. Physically, Webster was a magnificent specimen of a man. Such a form, such a face, such a presence, are rarely given to any man. Webster's manner had a wonderful impressiveness that intimacy never wore off. His gracious bearing and gentle courtesy made him the delight of every person he ever met. His oratory was in perfect keeping with the man, gracious, logical, majestic, and often sublime. He was by nature free, generous and lavish in his manner of living. As a result his own private finances were often much embarrassed. His wealthy admirers often tided him over his financial straits. Hampered as he was financially, he never sullied his great fame or enriched himself or others by political *jobbery*.

DANIEL WEBSTER, 1782-1852.

"Who does not rank him as a great American author? Against the maxim of Mr. Fox his speeches read well, and yet were good speeches—great speeches in delivery. So critically do they keep the right side of the line which parts eloquence from rhetoric, and so far do they rise above the penury of mere debate, that the general reason of the country has enshrined them at once, and forever, among our classics."—*Rufus Choate's Eulogy on Webster.*

"READ his works, and feel what a blessing civil and religious liberty is. Read them and feel what a blessing it is to live under a free government. Read them; and if, which God forbid, the obligations of the Constitution of your country hang loosely on you, rivet them with his thoughts. His giant efforts are embalmed in our school books, enshrined with the speeches of Burke, Sheridan, and Chatham, to animate and inspire the youth of our country."

"HE has poured the measureless wealth of his own intellect into all the schools and colleges of the land. There is scarcely a child in the country, twelve years old, whose mind has not been enriched by his speeches and orations. His speeches are destined to do more to promote the great objects of education, to form correct habits of thinking and speaking, and to put the rising American race in possession of a chastened, eloquent, powerful, literature, than any other instrumentality of the nineteenth century."—*Rev. Hubbard Winslow.*

"His speech had strength, force and dignity; his composition was clear, rational, strengthened by a powerful imagination—in his great orations 'the lightning of passion running along the iron links of argument.' The one lesson which they teach to the youth of America is self-respect, a manly consciousness of power, expressed simply and directly—to look for the substantial qualities of the thing, and utter them distinctly as they are felt intensely. This was the sum of the art which Webster used in his orations."—*E. A. Duyckinck.*

"WEBSTER's style is remarkable for clearness of statement. It is singularly emphatic. It is impressive rather than brilliant, and occasionally rises to absolute grandeur. It is evidently formed on the higher English models; and the reader conjectures his love of Milton from the noble simplicity of his language. Independent of their logical and rhetorical merit, these orations are invaluable from the nationality of their tone and spirit. They awaken patriotic reflection and sentiment, and are better adapted to warn, to enlighten, and to cheer the consciousness of the citizen, than any American works, of a didactic kind, yet produced."—*H. T. Tuckerman.*

"HE was probably the grandest looking man of his time. Wherever he went, men turned to gaze at him; and he could not enter a room without having every eye fastened upon him. His face was very striking, both in form and color. The eyebrow, the eye, and the dark and deep socket in which it glowed, were full of power. His smile was beaming, warming, fascinating; lighting up his whole face like a sudden sunrise. His voice was rich, deep, and strong, filling the largest space without effort, and when under excitement, rising and swelling into a violence of sound, like the roar of a tempest."—*George S. Hilliard.*

REFERENCES.

THE ablest and most complete life of Daniel Webster is that written by George T. Curtis. It is full of most interesting material. The most scholarly article on Webster is the eulogy delivered by George S. Hillard. For a compact and interesting life, read Lodge's Webster in the "American Statesmen Series." A valuable and suggestive essay has been written by E. P. Whipple and serves as an introduction to his "Webster's Great Speeches." The last mentioned work is the best and most complete of the various compilations of Webster's works. Harvey's *Reminiscences of Webster* and March's *Reminiscences in Congress* are interesting works for general reading. Tefft's *Webster and his Master-pieces*, Banvard's *The American Statesman* and Harsha's *Orators and Statesmen* contain much popular and interesting matter.

WHAT TO READ OF WEBSTER.

THE student who wishes to become familiar with the works of Webster should secure a copy of Whipple's *Great Speeches and Orations of Webster* and mark with pencil the best passages in several speeches. The "Bunker Hill Monument Orations" are well adapted to elementary study. Extracts from the argument on the "Murder of Capt. Joseph White," especially the famous preliminary remarks, are of absorbing interest. The Plymouth oration, on the "First Settlement of New England," has been called a series of eloquent fragments. The thoughts are fine, and are expressed in simple and beautiful words. The celebrated eulogy upon "Adams and Jefferson," the speeches on the "Character of Washington," the "Landing at Plymouth," and the "Addition to the Capitol," should form a part of the education of every American school-boy. Next read Mr. Webster's remarks on the death of Judge Story and of Jeremiah Mason, and finally the speech on laying the corner-stone for the addition to the Capitol in 1851. Of Webster's speeches in the United States Senate, the student should become familiar with portions of the "Reply to Hayne." It is one of those grand speeches which are landmarks in the history of eloquence. The speech as a whole has all the qualities which made Mr. Webster a great orator. He said that his whole life had been a preparation for the reply to Hayne. After selections from these orations and speeches have been studied, over and over again, the student will be well prepared to continue his studies in Webster with the strictly parliamentary speeches and discussions which have become a part of the intellectual life of the country.

WEBSTER AS A MASTER OF ENGLISH STYLE.

WEBSTER ranks high among the prose writers of the country as a master of English style. Like his oratory, his composition is plain, natural, easy, strong, dignified, and sometimes very lofty. His diction is entirely English. His words are the commonest in the language. They are those that we use in our own homes, and when talking with every-day friends. He had a powerful historic imagination, and could describe with great vividness, brevity, and force what had happened in the past or might happen in the dim future. As a rule, his sentences are short, pointed, and easily understood. Mr. Webster was a severe critic of his own style, sparing neither time or pains in revising and correcting his written orations. Aside from their profound thought and glowing patriotism, his great speeches can be read and studied to-day for their style alone, with the deepest interest, instruction, and pleasure. The young man who is training himself to think and speak on his feet should study Webster if he would attain to a perfect clearness of statement, joined to the highest skill in argument. He who would become a skilled debater and is ambitious "to learn the science of logical defence" should study the productions of this great master of eloquence until they become part and parcel of his own intellectual capital.

THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT.

An address delivered at the laying of the corner-stone of the Bunker Hill Monument at Charlestown, Mass., on the 17th of June, 1825.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

It was during the interim of his first and second appearance as a representative from Massachusetts that Mr. Webster pronounced his first oration at Bunker Hill, on the occasion of laying the corner-stone of the monument to be there erected. Such a monument had long been contemplated. An association for the erection of a monument to commemorate the battle of Bunker Hill had been for some time in existence in Boston, of which Mr. Webster was at this time president. As the fiftieth anniversary of the battle approached—the 17th of June, 1825—it was determined that the corner-stone of the monument should be laid on that day with appropriate ceremonies. Mr. Webster was unanimously requested by his fellow-trustees to deliver the address. General Lafayette was then making that tour through the United States which became, in its progress, the most remarkable ovation ever given in this country to any man, and the arrangements of his journey were so made as to admit of his being present on this occasion. Everything conspired to make the day memorable. "The morning," says Mr. Frothingham in his *History of the Siege of Boston*, "proved propitious. The air was cool, the sky was clear, and timely showers the previous day had brightened the verdure into its loveliest hue. Delighted thousands flocked into Boston to bear a part in the proceedings, or to witness the spectacle. At about ten o'clock, the procession moved from the State House toward Bunker Hill. It was a splendid procession, and of such length that the front nearly reached Charlestown Bridge, ere the rear had left Boston Common. It proceeded to Breed's Hill, where the Grand Master of the Freemasons, the President of the Monument Association, and General Lafayette, performed the ceremony of laying the corner-stone in presence of a vast concourse of people." "The procession then moved," says Edward Everett, "to a spacious amphitheater, on the northern declivity of the hill, where the address was delivered by Mr. Webster, in the presence of as great a multitude as was ever, perhaps, assembled within the sound of a human voice." This address, the text of which is given in the succeeding pages, was received with unbounded enthusiasm and has long been

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accepted as a master-piece of oratory. It should be read and re-read, and its best portions committed to memory, by every advanced student in our schools.

The editor has been obliged to omit such passages as are not of general interest. The wording has not been changed.

1. **THIS** uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

2. If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchres of our fathers. We are on ground, distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans. We live in what may be called the early age of this great Continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to enjoy and suffer the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence which God allows to men on earth.

3. We do not read even of the discovery of this Continent, *without feeling something of a personal interest in the event; without being reminded how much it has affected*

our own fortunes and our own existence. It would be still more unnatural for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say that most touching and pathetic scene, when the great discoverer of America¹ stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thoughts: extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

/ 4. Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. To us, their children, the story of their labors and sufferings can never be without interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth,² while the sea continues to wash it; nor will our brethren in another early and ancient Colony forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it.³ No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

1. Great discoverer of America.—Read full details of this anxious night passed on board of the little vessel of Columbus as given in Irving's *Life of Columbus*.

2. On the Shore of Plymouth.—In this connection read selections from Webster's grand oration on the "First Settlement of New England," delivered at Plymouth, December 22, 1820; also from his speech on "The Landing at Plymouth," delivered December 22, 1843.

3. An interesting account of the voyage of the early emigrants to the Maryland Colony, and of its settlement, is given in the official report of Father White, written probably within the first month after the landing at St. Mary's. The original Latin manuscript is still preserved

5. But the great event in the history of the Continent, which we are now met here to commemorate, that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, of high national honor, distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

6. The Society whose organ I am⁴ was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought, that for this object no time could be more propitious than the present prosperous and peaceful period; that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot; and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking, than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted, and that, springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain as long as Heaven permits the works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

7. We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread

among the archives of the Jesuits at Rome. The *Ark* and the *Dove* are remembered with scarcely less interest by the descendants of the sister colony, than is the *Mayflower* in New England, which thirteen years earlier, at the same season of the year, bore thither the *Pilgrim Fathers*.

4. Mr. Webster was at this time President of the Bunker Hill Monument Association.

over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself can carry information of the events we commemorate where it has not already gone; and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and, by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed, not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart. Let it not be supposed that our object is to perpetuate national hostility, or even to cherish a mere military spirit. It is higher, purer, nobler. We consecrate our work to the spirit of national independence, and we wish that the light of peace may rest upon it for ever. We rear a memorial of our conviction of that unmeasured benefit which has been conferred on our own land, and of the happy influences which have been produced, by the same events, on the general interests of mankind. We come, as Americans, to mark a spot which must for ever be dear to us and our posterity. We wish that whosoever, in all coming time, shall turn his eye hither, may behold that the place is not undistinguished where the first great battle of the Revolution was fought. We wish that this structure may proclaim the magnitude and importance of that event to every class and every age. We wish that infancy may learn the purpose of its erection from maternal lips, and that weary and withered age may behold it, and be solaced by the recollections which it suggests. We wish that labor may look up here, and be proud, in the midst of its toil. We wish that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come upon all nations, *must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may*

turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power are still strong. We wish that this column, rising towards heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object to the sight⁵ of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden him who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and glory of his country. Let it rise ! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming ; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

8. We live in a most extraordinary age. Events so various and so important that they might crowd and distinguish centuries are, in our times, compressed within the compass of a single life. When has it happened that history has had so much to record, in the same term of years, as since the 17th of June, 1775 ? Our own Revolution, which, under other circumstances, might itself have been expected to occasion a war of half a century, has been achieved ; twenty-four sovereign and independent States erected ; and a general government established over them, so safe, so wise, so free, so practical, that we might well wonder its establishment should have been accomplished so soon, were it not far the greater wonder that it should have been established at all. Two or three millions of people have been augmented to twelve, the great forests of the West prostrated beneath the arm of successful industry, and the dwellers on the banks of the Ohio and the Mississippi become the fellow-citizens and neighbors of those who cultivate the hills of New England.⁶ We have a commerce that leaves no sea un-

5. *Last object to the sight.*—The orator's wish has been granted. This grand monument has been all these years literally a landmark ever to be remembered by every American as he enters or leaves Boston Harbor.

6. That which was spoken of figuratively in 1825 has, in the lapse of a quarter of a century, by the introduction of railroads and telegraphic lines, become a reality. It is an interesting circumstance, that the first railroad on the Western Continent was constructed for the purpose of accelerating the erection of this monument.—Edward Everett, in 1850.

explored ; navies, which take no law from superior force ; revenues, adequate to all the exigencies of government, almost without taxation ; and peace with all nations, founded on equal rights and mutual respect.

9. Europe, within the same period, has been agitated by a mighty revolution, which, while it has been felt in the individual condition and happiness of almost every man, has shaken to the centre her political fabric, and dashed against one another thrones which had stood tranquil for ages. On this, our Continent, our own example has been followed, and colonies have sprung up to be nations. Unaccustomed sounds of liberty and free government have reached us from beyond the track of the sun ; and at this moment the dominion of European power in this Continent, from the place where we stand to the south pole, is annihilated for ever.⁷

10. In the mean time, both in Europe and America, such has been the general progress of knowledge, such the improvement in legislation, in commerce, in the arts, in letters, and, above all, in liberal ideas and the general spirit of the age, that the whole world seems changed.

11. Yet, notwithstanding that this is but a faint abstract of the things which have happened since the day of the battle of Bunker Hill, we are but fifty years removed from it ;⁸ and we now stand here to enjoy all the blessings of our own condition, and to look abroad on the brightened prospects of the world, while we still have among us some of those who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here from every quarter of New England, to visit one more, and under circumstances so affecting, I had almost said so overwhelming, this renowned theatre of their courage and patriotism.

12. Venerable men !⁹ you have come down to us from a

7. See President Monroe's Message to Congress, in 1823, and Mr. Webster's speech on the Panama Mission, in 1823.

8. Fifty years removed from it.—It will be interesting for the student to compare the growth and development of the country at the end of the century in 1875 and that of 1775 and 1825. What marked changes even since 1875?

9. Venerable men.—This famous passage was composed while Mr. Webster was trout fishing on Cape Cod. For once, the great orator was

former generation. Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now where you stood fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered ! The same heavens are indeed over your heads ; the same ocean rolls at your feet ; but all else how changed ! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon, you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying ; the impetuous charge ; the steady and successful repulse ; the loud call to repeated assault ; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance ; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death ;—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more. All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of the whole happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with a universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defence.¹⁰ All is peace ; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils ; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here,

indifferent to his favorite sport. In fact, as he states in his "Autobiography," he composed a great portion of his Bunker Hill address while middle deep in Marshpee River, waiting for the trout to bite. His son tells us how he quietly walked up near his father and overheard him rehearsing the passage beginning: "Venerable men," etc. Many of Webster's orations were chiefly composed before they were committed to paper. He was in the habit of preparing formal speeches *in the woods* and especially while fishing.

^{10.} *It is necessary to inform those only who are acquainted with the localities, that the United States Navy Yard at Charlestown is situated at the base of Bunker Hill.*

and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you !

13. But, alas ! you are not all here !¹¹ Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Read, Pomeroy, Bridge ! our eyes seek for you in vain amid this broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve, that you have met the common fate of men. You lived at least long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of peace, like

"another morn,
Risen on mid-noon";

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

14. But, ah ! Him ! the first great martyr¹² in this great cause ! Him ! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart ! Him ! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit ! Him ! cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom ; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise ; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage !—how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name ! Our poor work may perish ; but thine shall endure ! This monument may

11. Not all here.—About two hundred veterans of the Revolution, of whom forty survivors of the battle, rode in barouches next to the escort. These veterans were seated directly before Webster as he delivered this celebrated passage. "These venerable men," says Mr. Frothingham, "the relics of a past generation, with emaciated frames, tottering limbs, and trembling voices constituted a touching spectacle."

12. The first great martyr, etc.—Reference is made to General Joseph Warren who was killed in the battle of Bunker Hill. How much this patriot contributed by his voice and his pen, as well as his sword, to his country's cause before his untimely death is well known to every reader of American history.

moulder away ; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea ; but thy memory shall not fail ! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit.

15. But the scene amidst which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary army.

16. Veterans ! you are the remnant of many a well-fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. Veterans of half a century ! when in your youthful days you put everything at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this ! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive, at a moment of national prosperity such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met here to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers, and to receive the overflowings of a universal gratitude.

17. But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, present themselves before you. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years, and bless them ! And when you shall here have exchanged your embraces, when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to give succor in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory, then look abroad upon this lovely land which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled ; yea, look abroad *upon the whole earth*, and see what a name you have contributed to give your country, and what a praise you have

added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind !

18. The occasion does not require of me any particular account of the battle of the 17th of June, 1775, nor any detailed narrative of the events which immediately preceded it.¹³ These are familiarly known to all. In the progress of the great and interesting controversy, Massachusetts and the town of Boston had become early and marked objects of the displeasure of the British Parliament. This had been manifested in the act for altering the government of the Province, and in that for shutting up the port of Boston. Nothing sheds more honor on our early history, and nothing better shows how little the feelings and sentiments of the Colonies were known or regarded in England, than the impression which these measures everywhere produced in America. It had been anticipated, that, while the Colonies in general would be terrified by the severity of the punishment inflicted on Massachusetts, the other seaports would be governed by a mere spirit of gain ; and that, as Boston was now cut off from all commerce, the unexpected advantage which this blow on her was calculated to confer on other towns would be greatly enjoyed. How miserably such reasoners deceived themselves ! How little they knew of the depth, and the strength, and the intenseness of that feeling of resistance to illegal acts of power, which possessed the whole American people ! Everywhere the unworthy boon was rejected with scorn. The fortunate occasion was seized, everywhere, to show to the whole world that the Colonies were swayed by no local interest, no partial interest, no selfish interest. The temptation to profit by the punishment of Boston was strongest to our neighbors of Salem.¹⁴ Yet Salem was precisely the place where this

13. *Events which preceded it.*—The student should re-read the story of this period of American history in connection with the study of this portion of the oration. "The causes of the American Revolution" is a fruitful theme for collateral reading in this connection.

14. *Salem.*—Before the Revolution and shortly after, the commerce of Salem was of considerable importance.

miserable proffer was spurned, in a tone of the most lofty self-respect and the most indignant patriotism. "We are deeply affected," said its inhabitants, "with the sense of our public calamities ; but the miseries that are now rapidly hastening on our brethren in the capital of the Province greatly excite our commiseration. By shutting up the port of Boston some imagine that the course of trade might be turned hither and to our benefit ; but we must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to every feeling of humanity, could we indulge a thought to seize on wealth and raise our fortunes on the ruin of our suffering neighbors." These noble sentiments were not confined to our immediate vicinity. In that day of general affection and brotherhood, the blow given to Boston smote on every patriotic heart from one end of the country to the other. Virginia and the Carolinas, as well as Connecticut and New Hampshire, felt and proclaimed the cause to be their own. The Continental Congress, then holding its first session in Philadelphia, expressed its sympathy for the suffering inhabitants of Boston, and addresses were received from all quarters, assuring them that the cause was a common one, and should be met by common efforts and common sacrifices. The Congress of Massachusetts responded to these assurances ; and in an address to the Congress at Philadelphia, bearing the official signature, perhaps among the last, of the immortal Warren, notwithstanding the severity of its suffering and the magnitude of the dangers which threatened it, it was declared, that this Colony, "Is ready, at all times, to spend and to be spent in the cause of America."

19. But the hour drew nigh which was to put professions to the proof, and to determine whether the authors of these mutual pledges were ready to seal them in blood. The tidings of Lexington and Concord had no sooner spread, than it was universally felt that the time was at last come for action. A spirit pervaded all ranks, not transient, not boisterous, but deep, solemn, determined. War, on their own *soil and at their own doors*, was, indeed, a strange work *to the yeomanry of New England* ; but their consciences

were convinced of its necessity, their country called them to it, and they did not withhold themselves from the perilous trial. The ordinary occupations of life were abandoned ; the plough was staid in the unfinished furrow ; wives gave up their husbands, and mothers gave up their sons, to the battles of a civil war. Death might come, in honor, on the field ; it might come, in disgrace, on the scaffold. For either and for both they were prepared.

20. The 17th of June saw the four New England Colonies standing here, side by side, to triumph or to fall together ; and there was with them from that moment to the end of the war, what I hope will remain with them for ever, one cause, one country, one heart.

21. The battle of Bunker Hill was attended with the most important effects beyond its immediate results as a military engagement. It created at once a state of open, public war. There could now be no longer a question of proceeding against individuals, as guilty of treason or rebellion. That fearful crisis was past. The appeal lay to the sword, and the only question was, whether the spirit and the resources of the people would hold out till the object should be accomplished. Nor were its general consequences confined to our own country. The previous proceedings of the Colonies, their appeals, resolutions, and addresses, had made their cause known to Europe. Without boasting, we may say, that in no age or country has the public cause been maintained with more force of argument, more power of illustration, or more of that persuasion which excited feeling and elevated principle can alone bestow, than the Revolutionary state papers exhibit.

22. To this able vindication of their cause, the Colonies had now added a practical and severe proof of their own true devotion to it, and given evidence also of the power which they could bring to its support. All now saw, that, if America fell, she would not fall without a struggle. Men felt sympathy and regard, as well as surprise, when they beheld these infant States, remote, unknown, unaided, encounter the power of England, and in the first considerab.

battle, leave more of their enemies dead on the field, in proportion to the number of combatants, than had recently been known to fall in the wars of Europe.

23. Information of these events, circulating throughout the world, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me.¹⁵ He has not forgotten the emotion which the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast.

24. Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty, and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy of the living. But, Sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration.

25. Fortunate, fortunate man!¹⁶ with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain, that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, Sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended

15. Among the earliest of the arrangements for the celebration of the 17th of June, 1825, was the invitation to General Lafayette to be present; and he had so timed his progress through the other States as to return to Massachusetts in season for the great occasion.

16. Fortunate, fortunate man!—"The thrilling eloquence of the address to the old soldiers of Bunker Hill, and of the apostrophe to Warren, and the superb reservation of eulogy with which he spoke of and to General Lafayette were perhaps unequalled, surely never surpassed by Webster on any other occasion."—*Ticknor's Life of Webster*, II. 252.

to the last extremity by his lion-hearted valor ; and within which the corner-stone of our monument has now taken its position. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of war. Behold ! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold ! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you and yours for ever.

26. Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this structure. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give then this day to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, to Sullivan, and to Lincoln. We have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, O very far distant be the day, when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy !

27. The leading reflection to which this occasion seems to invite us, respects the great changes which have happened in the fifty years since the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. And it peculiarly marks the character of the present age, that, in looking at these changes, and in estimating their effect on our condition, we are obliged to consider, not what has been done in our own country only, but in others also. In these interesting times, while nations are making separate and individual advances in improvement, they make, too, a common progress ; like vessels on a common tide, propelled by the gales at different rates, according to their several structures and management, but all moved forward by one mighty current, strong enough to bear onward whatever does not sink beneath it.

28. A chief distinction of the present day is a community of opinions and knowledge amongst men in different *nations*, existing in a degree heretofore unknown. Knowl-

edge has, in our times, triumphed and is triumphing, over distance, over difference of languages, over diversity of habits, over prejudice, and over bigotry. The civilized and Christian world is fast learning the great lesson, that difference of nation does not imply necessary hostility, and that all contact need not be war. The whole world is becoming a common field for intellect to act in. Energy of mind, genius, power, wheresoever it exists, may speak out in any tongue, and the world will hear it. A great chord of sentiment and feeling runs through the two Continents, and vibrates over both. Every breeze wafts intelligence from country to country; every wave rolls it; all give it forth, and all in turn receive it. There is a vast commerce of ideas; there are marts and exchanges for intellectual discoveries, and a wonderful fellowship of those individual intelligences which make up the mind and the opinion of the age. Mind is the great leveler of all things; human thought is the process by which human ends are ultimately answered; and the diffusion of knowledge, so astonishing in the last half-century, has rendered innumerable minds, variously gifted by nature, competent to be competitors or fellow-workers on the theatre of intellectual operation.

29. From these causes important improvements have taken place in the personal condition of individuals. Generally speaking, mankind are not only better fed and better clothed, but they are able also to enjoy more leisure; they possess more refinement and more self-respect. A superior tone of education, manners, and habits prevail. This remark, most true in its application to our own country, is also partly true when applied elsewhere. It is proved by the vastly augmented consumption of those articles of manufacture and of commerce which contribute to the comforts and the decencies of life; an augmentation which has far outrun the progress of population. And while the unexampled and almost incredible use of machinery would seem to supply the place of labor, labor still finds its occupation and its reward; so *wisely* has Providence adjusted men's wants and desires to *their condition and their capacity*.

30. Any adequate survey, however, of the progress made during the last half-century in the polite and mechanic arts, in machinery and manufactures, in commerce and agriculture, in letters and in science, would require volumes. I must abstain wholly from these subjects, and turn for a moment to the contemplation of what has been done on the great questions of politics and government. This is the master topic of the age ; and during the whole fifty years it has intensely occupied the thoughts of men. The nature of civil government, its ends and uses, have been canvassed and investigated ; ancient opinions attacked and defended ; new ideas recommended and resisted, by whatever power the mind of man could bring to the controversy. From the closet and the public halls the debate has been transferred to the field ; and the world has been shaken by wars of unexampled magnitude, and the greatest variety of fortune. A day of peace has at length succeeded ; and now that the strife has subsided, and the smoke cleared away, we may begin to see what has actually been done, permanently changing the state and condition of human society. And, without dwelling on particular circumstances, it is most apparent, that, from the before mentioned causes of augmented knowledge and improved individual condition, a real, substantial, and important change has taken place, and is taking place, highly favorable, on the whole, to human liberty and human happiness.

31. The great wheel of political revolution began to move in America. Here its rotation was guarded, regular and safe. Transferred to the other Continent, from unfortunate but natural causes, it received an irregular and violent impulse ; it whirled along with a fearful celerity ; till at length like the chariot-wheels in the races of antiquity, it took fire from the rapidity of its own motion, and blazed onward, spreading conflagration and terror around.

32. We learn from the result of this experiment, how fortunate was our own condition, and how admirably the character of our people was calculated for setting the great example of popular governments. The possession of power

did not turn the heads of the American people, for they had long been in the habit of exercising a great degree of self-control. Although the paramount authority of the parent state existed over them, yet a large field of legislation had always been open to our Colonial assemblies. They were accustomed to representative bodies and the forms of free government ; they understood the doctrine of the division of power among different branches, and the necessity of checks on each. The character of our countrymen, moreover, was sober, moral and religious ; and there was little in the change to shock their feelings of justice and humanity, or even to disturb an honest prejudice. We had no domestic throne to overturn, no privileged orders to cast down, no violent changes of property to encounter. In the American Revolution, no man sought or wished for more than to defend and enjoy his own. None hoped for plunder or for spoil. Rapacity was unknown to it ; the axe was not among the instruments of its accomplishment ; and we all know that it could not have lived a single day under any well-founded imputation of possessing a tendency adverse to the Christian Religion.

33. It need not surprise us, that, under circumstances less auspicious, political revolutions elsewhere, even when well intended, have terminated differently. It is, indeed, a great achievement, it is the master-work of the world, to establish governments entirely popular on lasting foundations ; nor is it easy, indeed, to introduce the popular principle at all into governments to which it has been altogether a stranger. It cannot be doubted, however, that Europe has come out of the contest, in which she has been so long engaged, with greatly superior knowledge, and, in many respects, in a highly improved condition. Whatever benefit has been acquired is likely to be retained, for it consists mainly in the acquisition of more enlightened ideas. And although kingdoms and provinces may be wrested from the hands that hold them, in the same manner they were obtained ; *although ordinary and vulgar power may, in human affairs, be lost as it has been won ; yet it is the glorious*

prerogative of the empire of knowledge, that what it gains it never loses. On the contrary, it increases by the multiple of its own power ; all its ends become means ; all its attainments, helps to new conquests. Its whole abundant harvest is but so much seed wheat, and nothing has limited, and nothing can limit, the amount of ultimate product.

34. Under the influence of this rapidly increasing knowledge, the people have begun, in all forms of government, to think and to reason, on affairs of state. Regarding government as an institution for the public good, they demand a knowledge of its operations, and a participation in its exercise. A call for the representative system, wherever it is not enjoyed, and where there is already intelligence enough to estimate its value, is perseveringly made. Where men may speak out, they demand it ; where the bayonet is at their throats, they pray for it.

35. When Louis the Fourteenth¹⁷ said, " I am the State," he expressed the essence of the doctrine of unlimited power. By the rules of that system, the people are disconnected from the State ; they are its subjects, it is their lord. These ideas, founded in the love of power, and long supported by the excess and the abuse of it, are yielding, in our age, to other opinions ; and the civilized world seems at last to be proceeding to the conviction of that fundamental and manifest truth, that the powers of government are but a trust, and that they cannot be lawfully exercised but for the good of the community. As knowledge is more and more extended, this conviction becomes more and more general. Knowledge, in truth, is the great sun in the firmament. Life and power are scattered with all its beams.

36. We may hope that the growing influence of enlightened sentiment will promote the permanent peace of

17. Louis the Fourteenth.—Succeeded his father, Louis XIII, as king of France in 1643. On the death of Mazarin, his great prime minister, in 1661, the young king suddenly assumed the reins of government, and from that time forth carried into effect with rare energy a political theory of pure despotism. His famous saying, "*L'état c'est moi*" (*I am the State*), expressed the principle to which everything was accommodated.

the world. Wars to maintain family alliances, to uphold or to cast down dynasties, and to regulate successions to thrones, which have occupied so much room in the history of modern times, if not less likely to happen at all, will be less likely to become general and involve many nations, as the great principle shall be more and more established, that the interest of the world is peace, and its first great statute, that every nation possesses the power of establishing a government for itself. Let us thank God that we live in an age when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any one who would hazard it.

37. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency cannot extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven.

38. And, now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. Let us endeavor to comprehend in all its magnitude, and to feel in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration.

39. We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing condition, we leave the pref-

erence to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves; and the duty incumbent on us is to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed, that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

40. These are excitements to duty; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us, authorize the belief, that popular governments, though subject to occasional variations, in form perhaps not always for the better, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent¹⁸ as other systems. We know, indeed, that in our country any other is impossible. The *principle* of free governments adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it, immovable as its mountains.

41. And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those who established our liberty and our government are daily dropping from among us. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred,¹⁹ and other founders of

18. *Durable and permanent.*—The strength and durability of our popular form of government was put to a most severe test in the great war for the Union which began in 1861 and continued for more than four years. "The great duty of defence and preservation" was maintained at the cost of thousands of lives and millions of money.

19. *Solon and Alfred.*—Solon (born about 638 B. C.), the most famous of all the ancient Greek law-givers, established a code of laws which ex-

states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defence and preservation ; and there is opened to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four States are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, our country, our whole country, and nothing but our country. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of Wisdom, of Peace, and of Liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration for ever !

braced almost every subject of social importance. Alfred the Great, King of England, died in 901, after a reign of thirty years. He collected the laws of the Saxons, and formed them into a new code, and established a tribunal for the administration of justice, which may, perhaps, have suggested to a later sovereign (Henry II.) the trial by jury.

Note.—In the first Bunker Hill oration Mr. Webster touched his highest point in the difficult task of commemorative oratory. In that field he not only stands unrivaled, but no one has approached him. The innumerable productions of this class by other men, many of a high degree of excellence, are forgotten, while those of Webster form part of the education of every American school-boy, are widely read, and have entered into the literature and thought of the country.—*Henry Cabot Lodge's Webster.*

THE COMPLETION OF THE BUNKER HILL MONUMENT.

An address delivered on Bunker Hill, on the 17th of June, 1843.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

SEVENTEEN years had elapsed since the corner-stone of Bunker Hill Monument was laid, with the address of Webster, which had become imperishably associated, in every part of the Union, with the event which it was designed to commemorate. It was fitting that the eloquence of Webster should crown the work. The last stone was laid in its place on the morning of the 23d of July, 1842. It was determined by the directors of the Association, that the completion of the work should be celebrated in a manner not less imposing than that in which the laying of the corner-stone had been celebrated. Many circumstances conspired to increase the interest of the occasion. Webster's address in 1825 had obtained the widest circulation throughout the country. Passages from it had passed into household words throughout the Union. They made the Bunker Hill Monument a familiar thought with the people. The President and his Cabinet had accepted invitations to be present. One hundred and eight surviving veterans of the Revolution, among whom were some who were in the battle of Bunker Hill, imparted a touching interest to the scene. The day was uncommonly fine; cool for the season, and clear. Mr. Webster was stationed upon an elevated platform, in front of the audience and of the monument towering in the background. It is estimated that a hundred thousand persons were gathered about the spot, and nearly half that number are supposed to have been within the reach of the orator's voice. "When, after saying, 'It is not from my lips, etc. The powerful speaker stands motionless before us,' he paused, and pointed in silent admiration to the sublime structure, the audience burst into long and loud applause. It was some moments before the speaker could go on with the address." This second Bunker Hill address is naturally less impassioned than the first, but it is a discourse filled with a sober beauty, and with a very impressive statement of the true principle of the American Revolution, and of the systems of government which, derived through that revolution from English sources, were confirmed and established by it. The young student cannot read and re-read this

oration too many times. Portions of it should become familiar as household words.

To bring this address within the compass of this little book, sundry portions have been omitted, but the wording has not been changed or condensed.

1. A DUTY has been performed. A work of gratitude and patriotism is completed. This structure, having its foundations in soil which drank deep of early Revolutionary blood, has at length reached its destined height, and now lifts its summit to the skies.

2. We have assembled to celebrate the accomplishment of the undertaking, and to indulge afresh in the recollection of the great event which it is designed to commemorate. Eighteen years, more than half the duration of a generation of mankind, have elapsed since the corner-stone of this monument was laid. The hopes of its projectors rested on voluntary contributions, private munificence, and the general favor of the public. These hopes have not been disappointed.

3. The Bunker Hill Monument¹ is finished. Here it stands. Fortunate in the high natural eminence on which

1. *The Bunker Hill Monument.*—The following description of the Bunker Hill Monument and Square is from Mr. Frothingham's *History of the Siege of Boston*: "Monument Square is four hundred and seventeen feet from north to south, and four hundred feet from east to west, and contains nearly six acres. It embraces the whole site of the redoubt, and a part of the site of the breastwork. According to the most accurate plan of the town and the battle (Page's), the monument stands where the southwest angle of the redoubt was, and the whole of the redoubt was between the monument and the street that bounds it on the west. The small mound in the northeast corner of the square is supposed to be the remains of the breastwork. Warren fell about two hundred feet west of the monument. An iron fence encloses the square, and another surrounds the monument. The square has entrances on each of its sides, and at each of its corners, and is surrounded by a walk and rows of trees. The obelisk is thirty feet in diameter at the base, about fifteen feet at the top of the truncated part, and was designed to be two hundred and twenty feet high; but the mortar and the seams between the stones make the precise height two hundred and twenty-one feet. Within the shaft is a hollow cone, with a spiral stairway winding round it to its summit, which enters a circular chamber at the top. There are ninety courses of stone in the shaft,—six of them below the ground, and eighty-four above the ground. The capstone, or apex, is a single stone four feet square at the base, and three feet six inches in height, weighing two and a half tons."

It is placed, higher, infinitely higher in its objects and purposes, it rises over the land and over the sea ; and visible, at their homes, to three hundred thousand of the people of Massachusetts, it stands a memorial of the last, and a monitor to the present, and to all succeeding generations. I have spoken of the loftiness of its purpose. If it had been without any other design than the creation of a work of art, the granite of which it is composed would have slept in its native bed. It has a purpose, and that purpose gives it its character. That purpose enrobes it with dignity and moral grandeur. That well-known purpose it is which causes us to look up to it with a feeling of awe. It is itself the orator of this occasion. It is not from my lips, it could not be from any human lips, that that strain of eloquence is this day to flow most competent to move and excite the vast multitudes around me. The powerful speaker² stands motionless before us. It is a plain shaft. It bears no inscriptions, fronting to the rising sun, from which the future antiquary shall wipe the dust. Nor does the rising sun cause tones of music to issue from its summit. But at the rising of the sun, and at the setting of the sun ; in the blaze of noonday, and beneath the milder effulgence of lunar light ; it looks, it speaks, it acts, to the full comprehension of every American mind, and the awakening of glowing enthusiasm in every American heart. Its silent, but awful utterance ; its deep pathos, as it brings to our contemplation the 17th of June, 1775, and the consequences which have resulted to us, to our country, and to the world, from the events of that day, and which we know must continue to rain influence on the destinies of mankind to the end of time ; the elevation with which it raises us high above the ordinary feelings of life—surpass all that the study of the closet, or even the inspiration of genius, can produce. To-day it speaks to us. Its future auditories will be the suc-

2. The powerful speaker, etc.—No wonder the vast concourse of people burst forth into “long and loud applause,” as the great orator put all the strength of his matchless oratory into this masterly passage in his oration.

cessive generations of men, as they rise up before it and gather around it. Its speech will be of patriotism and courage ; of civil and religious liberty ; of free government ; of the moral improvement and elevation of mankind ; and of the immortal memory of those who, with heroic devotion, have sacrificed their lives for their country.

4. In the older world, numerous fabrics exist, reared by human hands, but whose object has been lost in the darkness of ages. They are now monuments of nothing but the labor and skill which constructed them.

5. The mighty pyramid itself, half buried in the sands of Africa, has nothing to bring down and report to us but the power of kings and the servitude of the people. If it had any purpose beyond that of a mausoleum, such purpose has perished from history and from tradition. If asked for its moral object, its admonition, its sentiment, its instruction to mankind, or any high end in its erection, it is silent ; silent as the millions which lie in the dust at its base, and in the catacombs which surround it. Without a just moral object, therefore, made known to man, though raised against the skies, it excites only conviction of power, mixed with strange wonder. But if the civilization of the present race of men, founded, as it is, in solid science, the true knowledge of nature, and vast discoveries in art, and which is elevated and purified by moral sentiment and by the truths of Christianity, be not destined to destruction before the final termination of human existence on earth, the object and purpose of this edifice will be known till that hour shall come. And even if civilization should be subverted, and the truths of the Christian religion obscured by a new deluge of barbarism, the memory of Bunker Hill and the American Revolution will still be elements and parts of the knowledge which shall be possessed by the last man to whom the light of civilization and Christianity shall be extended.

6. Banners and badges, processions and flags, announce to us, that amidst this uncounted throng are thousands of natives of New England now residents in other States. *Welcome, ye kindred names, with kindred blood ! From*

the broad savannas of the South, from the newer regions of the West, from amidst the hundreds of thousands of men of Eastern origin who cultivate the rich valley of the Genesee or live along the chain of the Lakes, from the mountains of Pennsylvania, and from the thronged cities of the coast, welcome, welcome! Wherever else you may be strangers, here you are all at home. You assemble at this shrine of liberty, near the family altars at which your earliest devotions were paid to heaven, near to the temples of worship first entered by you, and near to the schools and colleges in which your education was received. You come hither with a glorious ancestry of liberty. You bring names which are on the rolls of Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. You come, some of you, once more to be embraced by an aged Revolutionary father, or to receive another, perhaps a last, blessing, bestowed in love and tears, by a mother, yet surviving to witness and to enjoy your prosperity and happiness.

7. But if family associations and the recollections of the past bring you hither with greater alacrity, and mingle with your greeting much of local attachment and private affection, greeting also be given, free and hearty greeting, to every American citizen who treads this sacred soil with patriotic feeling, and respires with pleasure in an atmosphere perfumed with the recollections of 1775! This occasion is respectable,³ nay, it is grand, it is sublime, by the nationality of its sentiment. Among the seventeen millions of happy people who form the American community, there is not one that has not a deep and abiding interest in that which it commemorates.

8. Woe betide the man who brings to this day's worship feelings less than wholly American! Woe betide the man that can stand here with the fires of local resentment burning, or the purpose of fomenting local jealousies and the

3. *Respectable*.—Webster was fond of certain words, commonplace enough in themselves, to which he insisted on imparting a more than ordinary import. Two of these which meet us continually in reading his speeches are "interesting" and "respectable." Thus he speaks of "the *interesting* group upon the deck" of the *Mayflower*.

strifes of local interests festering and rankling in his heart ! Union, established in justice, in patriotism, and the most plain and obvious common interest—union, founded on the same love of liberty, cemented by blood shed in the same common cause—union has been the source of all our glory and greatness thus far, and is the ground of all our highest hopes. This column stands on Union. I know not that it might not keep its position, if the American Union, in the mad conflict of human passions, and in the strife of parties and factions, should be broken up and destroyed. I know not that it would totter and fall to the earth, and mingle its fragments with the fragments of Liberty and the Constitution, when State should be separated from State, and faction and dismemberment obliterate forever all the hopes of the founders of our republic, and the great inheritance of their children. It might stand. But who, from beneath the weight of mortification and shame that would oppress him, could look up to behold it? Whose eyeballs would not be seared by such a spectacle? For my part, should I live to such a time, I shall avert my eyes from it for ever.

9. It is not a mere military encounter of hostile⁴ armies that the battle of Bunker Hill presents its principal claim to attention. Yet, even as a mere battle, there were circumstances attending it extraordinary in character, and entitling it to peculiar distinction. It was fought on this eminence; in the neighborhood of yonder city; in the presence of many more spectators than there were combatants in the conflict. Men, women, and children, from every commanding position, were gazing at the battle, and looking for its result with all the eagerness natural to those who knew that the issue was fraught with the deepest consequences to themselves, personally, as well as to their country. Yet, on the 16th of June, 1775, there was nothing around this hill but verdure and culture. There was, in-

4. The Battle of Bunker Hill.—Read in connection with this passage full details of this first important battle of the Revolution. Read certain portions of Frothingham's "History of the Siege of Boston," Holmes' poem called "Grandmother's Story of the Battle of Bunker Hill."

deed, the note of awful preparation in Boston. There was the Provincial army at Cambridge, with its right flank resting on Dorchester, and its left on Chelsea. But here all was peace. Tranquillity reigned around. On the 17th, every thing was changed. On this eminence had arisen, in the night, a redoubt, built by Prescott, and in which he held command. Perceived by the enemy at dawn, it was immediately cannonaded from the floating batteries in the river, and from the opposite shore. And then ensued the hurried movement in Boston, and soon the troops of Britain embarked in the attempt to dislodge the Colonists. In an hour everything indicated an immediate and bloody conflict. Love of liberty on one side, proud defiance of rebellion on the other, hopes and fears, and courage and daring, on both sides, animated the hearts of the combatants as they hung on the edge of battle.

10. Both parties were anxious to try the strength of their arms. The pride of England would not permit the rebels, as she termed them, to defy her to the teeth ; and, without for a moment calculating the cost, the British general determined to destroy the fort immediately. On the other side, Prescott and his gallant followers longed and thirsted for a decisive trial of strength and of courage. They wished a battle, and wished it at once. And this is the true secret of the movements on this hill.

11. I will not attempt to describe that battle. The cannonading ; the landing of the British ; their advance ; the coolness with which the charge was met ; the repulse ; the second attack ; the second repulse ; the burning of Charlestown ; and, finally, the closing assault, and the slow retreat of the Americans,—the history of all these is familiar.

12. But the consequences of the battle of Bunker Hill were greater than those of any ordinary conflict, although between armies of far greater force, and terminating with more immediate advantage on the one side or the other. It was the first great battle of the Revolution ; and not only the first blow, but the blow which determined the contest. It did not, indeed, put an end to the war, but in the then

existing hostile state of feeling, the difficulties could only be referred to the arbitration of the sword. And one thing is certain: that after the New England troops had shown themselves able to face and repulse the regulars, it was decided that peace never could be established, but upon the basis of the Independence of the Colonies. When the sun of that day went down, the event of Independence was no longer doubtful. In a few days Washington heard of the battle, and he inquired if the militia had stood the fire of the regulars. When told that they had not only stood that fire, but reserved their own till the enemy was within eight rods, and then poured it in with tremendous effect, "Then," exclaimed he, "the liberties of the country are safe!" The consequences of this battle were just of the same importance as the Revolution itself.

13. If there was nothing of value in the principles of the American Revolution, then there is nothing valuable in the battle of Bunker Hill and its consequences. But if the Revolution was an era in the history of man favorable to human happiness, if it was an event which marked the progress of man all over the world from despotism to liberty, then this monument is not raised without cause. Then the battle of Bunker Hill is not an event undeserving celebrations, commemorations, and rejoicings, now, and in all coming times.

14. What, then, is the true and peculiar principle⁵ of the American Revolution, and of the systems of government which it has confirmed and established? The truth is, that the American Revolution was not caused by the instantaneous discovery of principles of government before unheard of, or the practical adoption of political ideas such as had never before entered into the minds of men. It was but the full development of principles of government, forms of society, and political sentiments, the origin of all which lay back two centuries in English and American history.

5. True and peculiar principle.—Master thoroughly Webster's able exposition of the "true and peculiar principle" of the Revolution. It is *the epitome* of all that can be said, stamped with all the fervor of *patriotic oratory*.

15. The discovery of America, its colonization by the nations of Europe, the history and progress of the colonies, from their establishment to the time when the principal of them threw off their allegiance to the respective states by which they had been planted, and founded governments of their own, constitute one of the most interesting portions of the annals of man. These events occupied three hundred years ; during which period civilization and knowledge made steady progress in the Old World ; so that Europe, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, had become greatly changed from that Europe which began the colonization of America at the close of the fifteenth, or the commencement of the sixteenth. And what is most material to my present purpose is, that in the progress of the first of these centuries, that is to say, from the discovery of America to the settlements of Virginia and Massachusetts, political and religious events took place, which most materially affected the state of society and the sentiments of mankind, especially in England and in parts of Continental Europe. After a few feeble and unsuccessful efforts by England, under Henry the Seventh,⁶ to plant colonies in America, no designs of that kind were prosecuted for a long period, either by the English government or any of its subjects. Without inquiring into the causes of this delay, its consequences are sufficiently clear and striking. England, in this lapse of a century, unknown to herself, but under the providence of God and the influence of events, was fitting herself for the work of colonizing North America, on such principles, and by such men, as should spread the English name and English blood, in time, over a great portion of the Western hemisphere. The commercial spirit was greatly fostered by several laws passed in the reign of Henry the

6. Henry the Seventh.—The discovery of America by Columbus in 1492 gave a great impulse to the spirit of maritime adventure throughout Western Europe. Under a commission of Henry VII, John Cabot made a voyage to the New World (1497), and discovered the coast of North America from Labrador southward. This was the origin of the English claim to a portion of the New World. Many wise and salutary laws were enacted during his reign, and commerce was greatly encouraged.

Seventh ; and in the same reign encouragement was given to arts and manufactures in the eastern countries, and some not unimportant modifications of the feudal system took place, by allowing the breaking of entails.

16. These and other measures, and other occurrences, were making way for a new class of society to emerge and show itself, in a military and feudal age ; a middle class, between the barons or great landholders and the retainers of the crown, on the one side, and the tenants of the crown and barons, and agricultural and other laborers, on the other side. With the rise and growth of this new class of society, not only did commerce and the arts increase, but better education, a greater degree of knowledge, juster notions of the true ends of government, and sentiments favorable to civil liberty, began to be spread abroad, and become more and more common. But the plants springing from these seeds were of slow growth. The character of English society had indeed begun to undergo a change ; but changes of national character are ordinarily the work of time. Operative causes were, however, evidently in existence, and sure to produce, ultimately, their proper effect. From the accession of Henry the Seventh to the breaking out of the civil wars, England enjoyed much greater exemption from war, foreign and domestic, than for a long period before, and during the controversy between the houses of York and Lancaster.⁷ These years of peace were favorable to commerce and the arts. Commerce and the arts augmented general and individual knowledge ; and knowledge is the only fountain, both of the love and the principles of human liberty.

17. Other powerful causes soon came into active play. The Reformation of Luther⁸ broke out, kindling up the minds

7. York and Lancaster.—The civil contests between these two great families of England were styled the Wars of the Roses, from the badge or symbol of each party. This civil strife broke out in 1455 and lasted thirty years. It was signalized by twelve pitched battles, and marked by the most unrelenting barbarity.

8. Reformation of Luther.—This great movement, at first religious and ecclesiastical, afterwards assumed a political and social character. It engrossed the attention of a large portion of Europe during the sixteenth century, materially affected the whole frame-work of society

of men afresh, leading to new habits of thought, and awakening in individuals energies before unknown even to themselves. The religious controversies of this period changed society, as well as religion ; indeed it would be easy to prove, if this occasion were proper for it, that they changed society to a considerable extent, where they did not change the religion of the state. They changed man himself, in his modes of thought, his consciousness of his own powers, and his desire of intellectual attainment. The spirit of commercial and foreign adventure, therefore, on the one hand, which had gained so much strength and influence since the time of the discovery of America, and, on the other, the assertion and maintenance of religious liberty, having their source indeed in the Reformation, but continued, diversified, and constantly strengthened by the subsequent divisions of sentiment and opinion among the Reformers themselves, and this love of religious liberty drawing after it, or bringing along with it, as it always does, an ardent devotion to the principle of civil liberty also, were the powerful influences under which character was formed, and men trained, for the great work of introducing English civilization, English law, and, what is more than all, Anglo-Saxon blood, into the wilderness of North America. Raleigh⁹ and his companions may be considered as the creatures, principally, of the first of these causes. High-spirited, full of the love of personal adventure, excited, too, in some degree, by the hopes of sudden riches from the discovery of mines of the precious metals, and not unwilling to diversify the labors of settling a colony with occasional cruising against the Spaniards in the West Indian Seas, they crossed and re-crossed the ocean with a frequency which surprises us, when we consider the state of navigation, and which evinces a most daring spirit.

and its institutions, and is called in history the Reformation. The leader of the Reformation in Germany was Martin Luther. The current literature that pertains to Luther and the Reformation is very prolific at the present time.

9. Raleigh.—The story of this gallant hero who figures so extensively in history and fiction is familiar to every school-boy. Read in this connection his Life and the well known story of his gallantry as given in Scott's "Kenilworth."

18. The other cause peopled New England. The *Mayflower*¹⁰ sought our shores under no high-wrought spirit of commercial adventure, no love of gold, no mixture of purpose warlike or hostile to any human being. Like the dove from the ark, she had put forth only to find rest. Solemn supplications on the shore of the sea, in Holland, had invoked for her, at her departure, the blessings of Providence. The stars which guided her were the unobscured constellations of civil and religious liberty. Her deck was the altar of the living God. Fervent prayers on bended knees mingled, morning and evening, with the voices of ocean and the sighing of the wind in her shrouds. Every prosperous breeze, which, gently swelling her sails, helped the Pilgrims onward in their course, awoke new anthems of praise; and when the elements were wrought into fury, neither the tempest, tossing their fragile bark like a feather, nor the darkness and howling of the midnight storm, ever disturbed, in man or woman, the firm and settled purpose of their souls, to undergo all, and to do all, that the meekest patience, the boldest resolution, and the highest trust in God, could enable human beings to suffer or to perform.¹¹

19. Some differences may, doubtless, be traced at this day between the descendants of the early colonists of Virginia and those of New England, owing to the different influences and different circumstances under which the respective settlements were made; but only enough to create a pleasing variety in the midst of a general family resemblance. But the habits, sentiments, and objects of both soon became modified by local causes, growing out of their condition in the New World; and as this condition was essentially alike in both, and as both at once adopted the same general rules and principles of English jurisprudence, and became accustomed to the authority of representative bodies, these differences gradually diminished. They disappeared by the prog-

10. The *Mayflower*.—The frail but celebrated vessel which brought the Pilgrims to the Plymouth shore. Read portions of Longfellow's "Courtship of Miles Standish."

11. Commit this graphic passage to memory, beginning: "The other cause peopled New England," etc.

ness of time, and the influence of intercourse. The necessity of some degree of union and co-operation to defend themselves against the savage tribes tended to excite in them mutual respect and regard. They fought together in the wars against France.¹² The great and common cause of the Revolution bound them to one another by new links of brotherhood; and at length the present constitution of government united them happily and gloriously to form the great republic of the world, and bound up their interests and fortunes, till the whole earth sees that there is now for them, in present possession as well as in future hope, but "One Country, One Constitution, and One Destiny."

20. The colonization of the tropical region, and the whole of the southern parts of the Continent, by Spain and Portugal, was conducted on other principles, under the influence of other motives, and followed by far different consequences. From the time of its discovery, the Spanish government pushed forward its settlements in America, not only with vigor, but with eagerness; so that long before the first permanent English settlement had been accomplished in what is now the United States, Spain had conquered Mexico, Peru, and Chili, and stretched her power over nearly all the territory she ever acquired on this Continent. The rapidity of these conquests¹³ is to be ascribed in a great degree to the eagerness, not to say the rapacity, of those numerous bands of adventurers, who were stimulated by individual interests and private hopes to subdue immense regions, and take possession of them in the name of the crown of Spain. The mines of gold and silver were the incitements to these efforts, and accordingly settlements were generally made, and Spanish authority established immediately on the subjugation of territory, that the native population might be set to work by their new Spanish masters in the mines. From

12. Wars against France.—Reference is made to what is popularly known as the "French and Indian Wars," which were carried on with much cruelty and bloodshed just before the war of the Revolution broke out.

13. These conquests.—For a full account of the Conquest of Mexico and Peru by Spain, the discovery of America and all that pertains to the Spanish conquests and discoveries in America, the student is referred to sundry chapters in Prescott's fascinating histories.

these facts, the love of gold—gold, not produced by industry, nor accumulated by commerce, but gold dug from its native bed in the bowels of the earth, and that earth ravished from its rightful possessors by every possible degree of enormity, cruelty and crime—was long the governing passion in Spanish wars and Spanish settlements in America. Even Columbus himself did not wholly escape the influence of this base motive. In his early voyages we find him passing from island to island, inquiring everywhere for gold; as if God had opened the New World to the knowledge of the Old, only to gratify a passion equally senseless and sordid, and to offer up millions of an unoffending race of men to the destruction of the sword, sharpened both by cruelty and rapacity. And yet Columbus was far above his age and country. Enthusiastic, indeed, but sober, religious, and magnanimous; born to great things and capable of high sentiments, as his noble discourse before Ferdinand and Isabella, as well as the whole history of his life, shows. Probably he sacrificed much to the known sentiments of others, and addressed to his followers motives likely to influence them. At the same time, it is evident that he himself looked upon the world which he discovered as a world of wealth, all ready to be seized and enjoyed.

21. The conquerors and the European settlers of Spanish America were mainly military commanders and common soldiers. The monarchy of Spain was not transferred to this hemisphere, but it acted in it, as it acted at home, through its ordinary means, and its true representative, military force. The robbery and destruction of the native race was the achievement of standing armies, in the right of the king, and by his authority, fighting in his name, for the aggrandizement of his power and the extension of his prerogatives, with military ideas under arbitrary maxims,—a portion of that dreadful instrumentality by which a perfect despotism governs a people. As there was no liberty in Spain, how could liberty be transmitted to Spanish colonies?

22. The colonists of English America were of the people, *and a people already free*. They were of the middle, indus-

trious, and already prosperous class, the inhabitants of commercial and manufacturing cities, among whom liberty first revived and respired, after a sleep of a thousand years in the bosom of the Dark Ages.¹⁴ Spain descended on the New World in the armed and terrible image of her monarchy and her soldiery; England approached it in the winning and popular garb of personal rights, public protection, and civil freedom. England transplanted liberty to America; Spain transplanted power. England, through the agency of private companies and the efforts of individuals, colonized this part of North America by industrious individuals, making their own way in the wilderness, defending themselves against the savages, recognizing their right to the soil, and with a general honest purpose of introducing knowledge as well as Christianity among them. Spain stooped on South America, like a vulture on its prey. Everything was force. Territories were acquired by fire and sword. Cities were destroyed by fire and sword. Hundreds of thousands of human beings fell by fire and sword. Even conversion to Christianity was attempted by fire and sword.

23. Behold, then, fellow-citizens, the difference resulting from the operation of the two principles! Here, to-day, on the summit of Bunker Hill, and at the foot of this monument, behold the difference! I would that the fifty thousand voices present could proclaim it with a shout which should be heard over the globe. Our inheritance was of liberty, secured and regulated by law, and enlightened by religion and knowledge; that of South America was of power, stern, unrelenting, tyrannical, military power. And now look to the consequences of the two principles on the general and aggregate happiness of the human race. Behold the results, in all the regions conquered by Cortéz and Pizarro, and the contrasted results here. I suppose the territory of the United States may amount to one-eighth, or one-tenth, of

14. Dark Ages.—According to Hallam the term applied to the Middle Ages, comprising about 1,000 years,—from the invasion of France by Clovis, 486, to that of Naples, by Charles VIII, 1495. During this time learning was at low ebb.

that colonized by Spain on this Continent ; and yet in all that vast region there are but between one and two millions of people of European color and European blood, while in the United States there are fourteen millions who rejoice in their descent from the people of the more northern part of Europe.

24. But we may follow the difference in the original principle of colonization, and in its character and objects, still farther. We must look to moral and intellectual results ; we must consider consequences, not only as they show themselves in hastening or retarding the increase of population and the supply of physical wants, but in their civilization, improvement, and happiness. We must inquire what progress has been made in the true science of liberty, in the knowledge of the great principles of self-government, and in the progress of man, as a social, moral, and religious being.

25. I would not willingly say anything on this occasion discourteous to the new governments founded on the demolition of the power of the Spanish monarchy. They are yet on their trial, and I hope for a favorable result. But truth, sacred truth, and fidelity to the cause of civil liberty, compel me to say, that hitherto they have discovered quite too much of the spirit of that monarchy from which they separated themselves. Quite too frequent resort is made to military force ; and quite too much of the substance of the people is consumed in maintaining armies, not for defence against foreign aggression, but for enforcing obedience to domestic authority. Standing armies are the oppressive instruments for governing the people, in the hands of hereditary and arbitrary monarchs. A military republic,¹⁵ a government founded on mock elections and supported only by the sword, is a movement indeed, but a retrograde and disastrous movement, from the regular and old-fashioned monarchical sys-

15. Military republic, etc.—More than forty years have elapsed since these glowing words were uttered. In the light of the world's history since 1843 have Webster's ideas of a republic been found to be sound and wise?

tems. If men would enjoy the blessings of republican government, they must govern themselves by reason, by mutual counsel and consultation, by a sense and feeling of general interest, and by the acquiescence of the minority in the will of the majority, properly expressed; and, above all, the military must be kept, according to the language of our Bill of Rights, in strict subordination to the civil authority. Wherever this lesson is not both learned and practised, there can be no political freedom. Absurd, preposterous is it, a scoff and a satire on free forms of constitutional liberty, for frames of government to be prescribed by military leaders, and the right of suffrage to be exercised at the point of the sword.

26. Making all allowance for situation and climate, it can not be doubted by intelligent minds, that the difference now existing between North and South America is justly attributable, in a great degree, to political institutions in the Old World and in the New. And how broad that difference is! Suppose an assembly, in one of the valleys or on the side of one of the mountains of the southern half of the hemisphere, to be held, this day, in the neighborhood of a large city;—what would be the scene presented? Yonder is a volcano, flaming and smoking, but shedding no light, moral or intellectual. At its foot is the mine, sometimes yielding; perhaps, large gains to capital, but in which labor is destined to eternal and unrequited toil, and followed only by penury and beggary. The city is filled with armed men; not a free people, armed and coming forth voluntarily to rejoice in a public festivity, but hiring troops, supported by forced loans, excessive impositions on commerce, or taxes wrung from a half-fed and a half-clothed population. For the great there are palaces covered with gold; for the poor there are hovels of the meanest sort. Do public improvements favor intercourse between place and place? So far from this, the traveler can not pass from town to town, without danger, every mile, of robbery and assassination. I would not overcharge or exaggerate this picture; but its principal features are all too truly sketched.

27. And how does it contrast with the scene now actually before us? Look round upon these fields ; they are verdant and beautiful, well cultivated, and at this moment loaded with the riches of the early harvest. The hands which till them are those of the free owners of the soil, enjoying equal rights, and protected by law from oppression and tyranny. Look to the thousand vessels in our sight, filling the harbor, or covering the neighboring sea. They are the vehicles of a profitable commerce, carried on by men who know that the profits of their hardy enterprise, when they make them, are their own ; and this commerce is encouraged and regulated by wise laws, and defended, when need be, by the valor and patriotism of the country. Look to that fair city, the abode of so much diffused wealth, so much general happiness and comfort, so much personal independence, and so much general knowledge, and not undistinguished, I may be permitted to add, for hospitality and social refinement. She fears no forced contributions, no siege or sacking from military leaders of rival factions. The hundred temples in which her citizens worship God are in no danger of sacrilege. The regular administration of the laws encounters no obstacle. The long processions of children and youth, which you see this day, issuing by thousands from her free schools, prove the care and anxiety with which a popular government provides for the education and morals of the people. Everywhere there is order; everywhere there is security. Everywhere the law reaches to the highest and reaches to the lowest, to protect all in their rights, and to restrain all from wrong ; and over all hovers liberty,—that liberty for which our fathers fought and fell on this very spot, with her eye ever watchful, and her eagle wing ever wide outspread.

28. The English colonists in America, generally speaking, were men who were seeking new homes in a new world. They brought with them their families and all that was most dear to them. This was especially the case with the colonists of Plymouth and Massachusetts. Many of them *were educated men*, and all possessed their full share, ac-

cording to their social condition, of the knowledge and attainments of that age. The distinctive characteristic of their settlement is the introduction of the civilization of Europe into a wilderness, without bringing with it the political institutions of Europe. The arts, sciences, and literature of England came over with the settlers. That great portion of the common law¹⁶ which regulates the social and personal relations and conduct of men, came also. The jury came: the *habeas corpus* came; the testamentary power came; and the law of inheritance and descent came also, except that part of it which recognizes the rights of primogeniture, which either did not come at all, or soon gave way to the rule of equal partition of estates among children. But the monarchy did not come, nor the aristocracy, nor the Church, as an estate of the realm. Political institutions were to be framed anew, such as should be adapted to the state of things. But it could not be doubtful what should be the nature and character of these institutions. A general social equality prevailed among the settlers, and an equality of political rights seemed the natural, if not the necessary consequence.

29. It has been said with much vivacity, that the felicity of the American colonists consisted in their escape from the past. This is true so far as respects political establishments, but no farther. They brought with them a full portion of all the riches of the past, in science, in art, in morals, religion, and literature. The Bible came with them. And it is not to be doubted, that to the free and universal reading of the Bible, in that age, men were much indebted for right views of civil liberty. The Bible is a book of faith, and a book of doctrine, and a book of morals, and a book of religion, of especial revelation from God; but it is also a book which teaches man his own individual responsibility, his own dignity, and his equality with his fellow-man.

16. Great portion of the common law.—It will be interesting for the student to review his English history in this connection, and trace the gradual growth of these great bulwarks of civil and religious liberty in England.

30. Bacon and Locke, and Shakespeare and Milton, also came with the colonists. It was the object of the first settlers to form new political systems, but all that belonged to cultivated man, to family, to neighborhood, to social relations, accompanied them. In the Doric phrase of one of our own historians, "they came to settle on bare creation;" but their settlement in the wilderness, nevertheless, was not a lodgement of nomadic tribes, a mere resting-place of roaming savages. It was the beginning of a permanent community, the fixed residence of cultivated men. Not only was English literature read, but English, good English, was spoken and written, before the axe had made way to let in the sun upon the habitations and fields of Plymouth and Massachusetts. And whatever may be said to the contrary, a correct use of the English language is, at this day, more general throughout the United States, than it is throughout England herself.

31. But another grand characteristic is, that, in the English colonies, political affairs were left to be managed by the colonists themselves. This is another fact wholly distinguishing them in character, as it has distinguished them in fortune, from the colonists of Spain. Here lies the foundation of that experience in self-government, which has preserved order, and security, and regularity, amidst the play of popular institutions. Home government was the secret of the prosperity of the North American settlements. The more distinguished of the New England colonists, with a most remarkable sagacity and a long-sighted reach into futurity, refused to come to America unless they could bring with them charters providing for the administration of their affairs in this country. They saw from the first the evils of being governed in the New World by a power fixed in the Old. Acknowledging the general superiority of the crown, they still insisted on the right of passing local laws, and of local administration. And history teaches us the justice and the value of this determination in the example of Virginia. The early attempts to settle that Colony failed, sometimes *with the most melancholy and fatal consequences*, from



want of knowledge, care, and attention on the part of those who had the charge of their affairs in England ; and it was only after the issuing of the third charter, that its prosperity fairly commenced. The cause was, that by that third charter the people of Virginia, for by this time they deserved to be so called, were allowed to constitute and establish the first popular representative assembly¹⁷ which ever convened on this Continent, the Virginia House of Burgesses.

32. The great elements, then, of the American system of government, originally introduced by the colonists, and which were early in operation, and ready to be developed, more and more, as the progress of events should justify or demand, were,—

33. Escape from the existing political system of Europe, including its religious hierarchies, but the continued possession and enjoyment of its science and arts, its literature, and its manners ;

34. Home government, or the power of making in the colony the municipal laws which were to govern it ;

Equality of rights ;

Representative assemblies, or forms of government, founded on popular elections.

35. Few topics are more inviting, or more fit for philosophical discussion, than the effect on the happiness of mankind of institutions founded upon these principles ; or, in other words, the influence of the New World upon the Old.

36. Her obligations to Europe for science and art, laws, literature, and manners, America acknowledges as she ought, with respect and gratitude. The people of the United States, descendants of the English stock, grateful for the treasures of knowledge derived from their English ancestors,

17. First popular representative assembly.—Yearly, a new governor of Virginia, arrived in 1619. There were then, twelve years after the landing at Jamestown, but 600 colonists, and seven distinct plantations or boroughs. Yearly, having made the number of boroughs eleven, called a meeting of the first colonial Assembly, or “House of Burgesses,” to which each of the boroughs sent its own chosen representatives. A written constitution, granted to the colony in 1621, still further secured to the people the blessing of a representative form of government. This was the first representative assembly in America.

admit also, with thanks and filial regard, that among those ancestors, under the culture of Hampden and Sydney¹⁸ and other assiduous friends, that seed of popular liberty first germinated, which on our soil has shot up to its full height, until its branches overshadow all the land.

37. But America has not failed to make returns. If she has not wholly canceled the obligation, or equaled it by others of like weight, she has, at least, made respectable advances towards repaying the debt. And she admits, that, standing in the midst of civilized nations, and in a civilized age, a nation among nations, there is a high part which she is expected to act, for the general advancement of human interests and human welfare.

38. American mines have filled the mints of Europe with the precious metals. The productions of the American soil and climate have poured out their abundance of luxuries for the tables of the rich, and of necessities for the sustenance of the poor. Birds and animals of beauty and value have been added to the European stocks; and transplantations from the unequalled riches of our forests have mingled themselves profusely with the elms, and ashes, and Druidical oaks of England.

39. America has made contributions to Europe far more important. Who can estimate the amount, or the value, of the augmentation of the commerce of the world that has resulted from America? Who can imagine to himself what would now be the shock to the Eastern Continent, if the Atlantic were no longer traversable, or if there were no longer American productions, or American markets?

40. But America exercises influences, or holds out examples, for the consideration of the Old World, of a much higher, because they are of a moral and political character.

41. America has furnished to Europe proof of the fact, that popular institutions, founded on equality and the principle

18. Hampden and Sydney.—John Hampden (1594-1643), a distinguished English patriot, was an able advocate of human rights and a staunch friend of the people. Read Macaulay's essay on Hampden. Aigernon Sydney (1622-1683), an English republican patriot, entered the Parliamentary army, and was wounded at Marston Moor. 1644. He wrote "Discourses on Government."

of representation, are capable of maintaining governments, able to secure the rights of person, property, and reputation.

42. America has proved that it is practicable to elevate the mass of mankind,—that portion which in Europe is called the laboring, or lower class,—to raise them to self-respect, to make them competent to act a part in the great right and great duty of self-government; and she has proved that this may be done by education and the diffusion of knowledge. She holds out an example, a thousand times more encouraging than ever was presented before, to those nine-tenths of the human race who are born without hereditary fortune or hereditary rank.

43. America has furnished to the world the character of Washington! And if our American institutions had done nothing else, that alone would have entitled them to the respect of mankind.

Washington!¹⁹ "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen!" Washington is all our own! The enthusiastic veneration and regard in which the people of the United States hold him, prove them to be worthy of such a countryman; while his reputation abroad reflects the highest honor on his country. I would cheerfully put the question to-day to the intelligence of Europe and the world, what character of the century, upon the whole, stands out in the relief of history, most pure, most respectable, most sublime; and I doubt not, that, by a suffrage approaching to unanimity, the answer would be Washington!

44. The structure now standing before us, by its uprightness, its solidity, its durability, is no unfit emblem of his character. His public virtues and public principles were as firm as the earth on which it stands; his personal motives, as pure as the serene heaven in which its summit is lost. But, indeed, though a fit, it is an inadequate emblem. Towering high above the column which our hands have builded,

19. Washington!—Webster's grand eulogy of Washington is indeed a matchless piece of oratory. Read and re-read it until every sentence is indelibly fastened upon the memory.

beheld, not by the inhabitants of a single city or a single State, but by all the families of man, ascends the colossal grandeur of the character and life of Washington. In all the constituents of the one, in all the acts of the other, in all its titles to immortal love, admiration, and renown, it is an American production. It is the embodiment and vindication of our Transatlantic liberty. Born upon our soil, of parents also born upon it; never for a moment having had sight of the Old World; instructed, according to the modes of his time, only in the spare, plain, but wholesome elementary knowledge which our institutions provide for the children of the people; growing up beneath and penetrated by the genuine influences of American society; living from infancy to manhood and age amidst our expanding, but not luxurious civilization; partaking in our great destiny of labor, our long contest with unreclaimed nature and uncivilized man, our agony of glory, the war of Independence, our great victory of peace, the formation of the Union, and the establishment of the Constitution,—he is all, all our own! Washington is ours. That crowded and glorious life,

“Where multitudes of virtues passed along,
Each pressing foremost, in the mighty throng
Ambitious to be seen, then making room
For greater multitudes that were to come,”—

that life was the life of an American citizen.

45. I claim him for America. In all the perils, in every darkened moment of the state, in the midst of the reproaches of enemies and the misgivings of friends, I turn to that transcendent name for courage and for consolation. To him who denies or doubts whether our fervid liberty can be combined with law, with order, with the security of property, with the pursuits and advancement of happiness; to him who denies that our forms of government are capable of producing exaltation of soul, and the passion of true glory; to him who denies that we have contributed anything to the stock of *great lessons and great examples*;—to all these I reply by *pointing to Washington!*

46. And now, friends and fellow-citizens, it is time to bring this discourse to a close. We have indulged in gratifying recollections of the past, in the prosperity and pleasures of the present, and in high hopes for the future. But let us remember that we have duties and obligations to perform, corresponding to the blessings which we enjoy. Let us remember the trust, the sacred trust, attaching to the rich inheritance which we have received from our fathers. Let us feel our personal responsibility, to the full extent of our power and influence, for the preservation of the principles of civil and religious liberty. And let us remember that it is only religion, and morals, and knowledge, that can make men respectable and happy, under any form of government. Let us hold fast the great truth, that communities are responsible, as well as individuals; that no government is respectable, which is not just; that without unspotted purity of public faith, without sacred public principle, fidelity, and honor, no mere forms of government, no machinery of laws, can give dignity to political society. In our day and generation let us seek to raise and improve the moral sentiment, so that we may look, not for a degraded, but for an elevated and improved future. And when both we and our children shall have been consigned to the house appointed for all living, may love of country and pride of country glow with equal fervor among those to whom our names and our blood shall have descended! And then, when honored and decrepit age shall lean against the base of this monument, and troops of ingenuous youth shall be gathered round it, and when the one shall speak to the other of its objects, the purposes of its construction, and the great and glorious events with which it is connected, there shall rise from every youthful breast the ejaculation, "Thank God, I—I also—am an American!"

NOTE.—The second Bunker Hill oration, although very fine, was perceptibly inferior to his first effort when the corner-stone of the monument was laid. The address on the character of Washington, to an American the most dangerous of great and well-worn topics, is of a high order of eloquence. The theme appealed to Mr. Webster strongly and brought out his best powers, which were peculiarly fitted to do justice to the noble, massive, and dignified character of the subject.—*Henry Cabot Lodge's Webster.*

TEST QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Who was Daniel Webster?
2. Where and when was he born?
3. What can you say of his father and mother?
4. Tell something about Webster's boyhood days in the wilds of New Hampshire.
5. What can you tell of his early love for books?
6. Illustrate by what he afterwards told of his committing portions of Pope, Addison and other English classic authors to memory.
7. What have you learned of Webster's early school life?
8. Why were his opportunities so very meagre?
9. Tell what you can of his brother Ezekiel.
10. Can you give the often-quoted story of the plea for the life of a woodchuck, made by the two brothers?
11. To what famous school was Daniel sent at an early age?
12. What peculiar timidity did the future orator show at this school?
13. Repeat from memory what he said about it.
14. What other great orators have showed a similar weakness in early life?
15. What college did Webster fit for and attend?
16. What have you read of his college career?
17. What local fame did he acquire at college?
18. What did he do first after graduation?
19. What did he do with his first savings?
20. Tell something about Ezekiel Webster's untimely death.
21. What opinion did Webster always cherish of his brother's talents?
22. What profession did Daniel adopt?
23. Where did he first settle, and with what success?
24. What official position was he offered?
25. Was this a turning point in his career, and why?
26. What can you say of his father's disappointment?
27. Explain how a few years showed that the future orator decided wisely.
28. What was his first entrance to a political career?
29. What great fame did he now rapidly gain?
30. Mention the political positions filled by him during his life.
31. What can you say of his fame as a great lawyer, as a great orator, and as a great statesman?
32. Tell what you can of one or more of his great legal cases.
33. Mention the circumstances attending the delivery of three or more of his great orations.
34. What were some of the most noteworthy things done by him as a statesman?
35. Describe Daniel Webster's personal appearance.
36. To what extent did it help his oratory?
37. What were some of his most marked personal characteristics?
38. What was the great disappointment of his life?
39. Did it hasten his death?
40. When and where did Daniel Webster die?
41. What can you say of his last days?
42. What were the marked characteristics of his oratory?
43. How will Webster compare with other great orators of this or any other great country? Explain in some detail.

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